

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9959

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TAGS: EAIR, MASS, XX, BL

SUBJECT: "TRANSPORTES AEREOS BOLIVIANOS" (TAB) INTEREST IN OPERATING
NON-
SCHEDULED SERVICES BETWEEN BOLIVIA AND US

1. BOLIVIAN AIR FORCE (BAF) LT. COL. JAIME
PEREDO ALAIZA IS HEADING A SMALL DELEGATION OF REPRESENTATIVES OF TAB, WHO WILL BE IN WASHINGTON THE WEEK OF MARCH 20. THEY PLAN TO OBTAIN LEGAL COUNSEL AND DISCUSS WITH THE CAB (AND POSSIBLY FAA) THE POSSIBILITIES FOR OPERATING NON-SCHEDULED CARGO SERVICES BETWEEN BOLIVIA AND MIAMI, HOUSTON AND DENVER.

2. BY WAY OF BACKGROUND, THE BAF PURCHASED TWO C-130 AIRCRAFT FROM LOCKHEED IN 1977--ONE UNDER AN FMS CREDIT. THEIR PRINCIPAL OPERATIONAL MISSION IS DOMESTIC SHORT HAUL OF HEAVY OUTSIZED EQUIPMENT (E.G. FOR ROAD CONSTRUCTION) TO REMOTE, INACCESSIBLE AREAS IN SUPPORT OF THE NATION BUILDING ROLE OF THE BOLIVIAN ARMED FORCES. HOWEVER, IT APPEARS THAT THE GOB'S ABILITY TO MAINTAIN PAYMENTS ON FMS CREDITS AND COMMERCIAL LOANS WHICH WERE USED TO PURCHASE THE C-130 AIRCRAFT IS HIGHLY DEPENDENT UPON REVENUES FROM DOMESTIC HEAVY CARGO HAULAGE BEYOND THEIR PRINCIPAL MISSION, AND, MORE IMPORTANTLY, ON NON-SCHEDULED CARGO FLIGHTS BETWEEN BOLIVIA AND THE US. THE CARRIAGE OF OUTSIZE, HEAVY ITEMS BACK AND FORTH FOR THE PETROLEUM INDUSTRY
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WOULD BE TAB'S MAIN US BUSINESS. US PETROLEUM FIRMS IN LA PAZ CONFIRM THAT CAPACITY FOR CARRIAGE OF SUCH EQUIPMENT IS A CONTINUING PROBLEM.

3. THE C-130'S INITIALLY WERE OPERATED AS INTEGRAL COMPONENTS OF THE BAF. OCCASIONALLY THEY WERE OPERATED INTO AND OUT OF US MILITARY AIRFIELDS. BAF LEARNED EVENTUALLY THAT IN ORDER

TO HAUL CIVIL REVENUE CARGO IT WOULD HAVE TO OPERATE INTO US CIVIL AIRPORTS UNDER CAB REGULATIONS, AND NOT AS MILITARY AIRCRAFT. IN ORDER TO COMPLY WITH US REGULATIONS, THE C-130'S WERE SEPARATED FROM BAF OPERATIONS AND WERE CONSOLIDATED IN A NEW GOVERNMENT ENTITY, TRANSPORTES AEREOS BOLIVIANOS (TAB) AND PLACED UNDER CIVILIAN REGISTRY.

4. SUBSEQUENT TO THE REORGANIZATION, WE HAVE BEEN TOLD, TAB HAS SOUGHT CAB AUTHORITY TO SERVE US AIRPORTS ON A CASE-BY-CASE BASIS AND HAS MADE A NUMBER OF FLIGHTS TO THE US. WE GATHER THAT THERE ARE PROBLEMS FROM THE US VIEWPOINT, PARTICULARLY AS THEY RELATE TO THE STATUS OF TAB, ITS AUTHORITY TO PROVIDE CARGO SERVICES TO THE US, POSSIBLE RECIPROCAL RIGHTS, AND PERHAPS WITH REGARD TO CERTIFICATION OF THE C-130'S. (ALTHOUGH THEY ARE CERTIFIED IN BOLIVIA TO HAUL CIVIL CARGO.)

5. EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE LEARNING OF THE OUTCOME OF DISCUSSIONS WHICH LT. COL PEREDO MAY HAVE WITH THE CAB. WE HAVE A SPECIAL INTEREST IN THAT, FROM A SECURITY ASSISTANCE VIEWPOINT, THE US HAS CONSISTENTLY RECOGNIZED AND ENCOURAGED THE HEAVY EMPHASIS WHICH THE BOLIVIAN ARMED FORCES HAVE ASSIGNED TO NATION BUILDING. THE PURCHASES AND OPERATION OF THE TWO C-130 AIRCRAFT ARE SUPPORTIVE OF THIS ROLE. THE EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE THE DEPARTMENT'S ASSISTANCE IN ENSURING THAT PEREDO RECEIVES A SYMPATHETIC HEARING, AND IF POSSIBLE, A FAVORABLE RESOLUTION TO THE TAB REQUEST.

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Message Attributes

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